



NEWSLETTER

SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF THE MILITARY



RIBBON CUTTING FOR STATE VETERANS CEMETERY

The South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs invites you to join us for a Memorial Day program and ribbon cutting ceremony on Monday, May 31, 2021 at 2:00 pm (CT) at South Dakota's first state veterans cemetery. The cemetery is located at 25965 477th Avenue in Sioux Falls (just north of 1-229/1-90 Interchange off Slip Up Creek Road and 477th Avenue).

Construction of the initial phase of the cemetery is completed, with interments scheduled to begin the first week of June 2021.

With all the earthwork and landscaping that has been done, parking is very limited at the Cemetery for the celebration. The Department is encouraging attendees to utilize transportation to and from the cemetery that will be provided by River Cities Public Transit. Bus rides to the event will originate at the South Dakota Military Heritage Alliance (1600 W. Russell Street) starting at noon and will run until 1:45 pm. Also, we encourage attendees to bring their lawn chairs.

Immediately following the ceremony, busses will begin transportation back to the Alliance Building. Upon arrival, guests are encouraged to continue the celebration with dinner and entertainment. The dinner will be provided from our partners with Keystone Treatment Centers and entertainment will be courtesy of the El Riad Shrine Chanters.



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BRIDGE TO BE DEDICATED IN HONOR OF PVTS DALE AND DAVID CROW

The South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs will be hosting a State Bridge Dedication Ceremony to honor Combat Veterans PVT David Crow and PVT Dale Crow.

The ceremony will be held Tuesday, June 1, 2021, at 2:00 pm (MT) at the Bison High School (200 E. Carr Street).

The HWY 73 bridge near Summerville will be dedicated to these two cousins, formerly of Lemmon. Dale distinguished himself on September 6, 1950, while participating in an attack on a strongly defended enemy position located on Hill 285, near Sibi-ri, Korea. During the assault, Dale was seriously wounded; a comrade was dressing his wound when an en-

emy grenade fell close to them. Dale threw his body over that of his comrade, thereby receiving the full blast of the grenade which took his life.

David was killed instantly by enemy small arms fire on September 6, 1950, while his unit was waging a bitter fight on Hill 285 against an offensive by numerically superior hostile forces. He too made a gallant stand and died a soldier's death.

Naming bridges in honor of our combat veterans who died while serving their country is an initiative of Governor Kristi Noem and the South Dakota Departments of Military, Transportation, and Veterans Affairs.

"Whenever and wherever this nation has called, in times of darkness and danger, as well as in times of peace and prosperity, veterans have been there and have proudly carried the torch of liberty for all to see," said Greg Whitlock, secretary of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs.

"Our fallen heroes are no longer with us, but their memories live on in the hearts of their loved ones and our state," said Whitlock. "Naming our South Dakota bridges in honor of our fallen will give us an opportunity to remember and respect the men and women who gave their lives in service to this nation."



PVT Dale Crow



PVT David Crow

VETERAN STAND DOWN PINE RIDGE



When: Friday, June 11, 2021, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Where: Pine Ridge Pow Wow Grounds, Pine Ridge, SD

SERVICES OFFERED

Lunch
Clothing
VA Benefits
Housing Referrals

Employment Services
Legal Assistance
Readjustment Counseling
Much More!

* Please bring a copy of your DD214, dependent information, and identification to the event. Documentation is needed so we can fully serve you and your needs.

For questions contact VA Black Hills:
Chistel Kitzelman at: 605-490-0029

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
Black Hills Health Care System



VETERAN STAND DOWN EAGLE BUTTE

When: Wednesday, June 16, 2021, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Where: Eagle Butte Pow Wow Grounds, Eagle Butte, SD

SERVICES OFFERED

Lunch
Clothing
VA Benefits
Housing Referrals

Employment Services
Legal Assistance
Readjustment Counseling
Much More!

* Please bring a copy of your DD214, dependent information, and identification to the event. Documentation is needed so we can fully serve you and your needs.

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SD GUARD ENGINEERS COMPLETE CONSTRUCTION PROJECT AT BEAR BUTTE

Soldiers with the South Dakota National Guard's 842nd Engineer Company refurbished the observation deck near the summit of Bear Butte as part of an Innovative Readiness Training project, April 24 to May 2.

South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks and Bear Butte State Park officials partnered with the SDNG to replace the weathered platform decking and stairs with new treated wood.

"The need to repair, replace or upgrade aging infrastructure is always a major need in any state park," said Jim Jandreau, BBSP park manager. "Most projects can be handled by the district that a park is located in. However, our observation deck is in a very inaccessible location when it comes to stocking material to do such a project."

The SDNG participated in the project through its IRT program, which partners with organizations on projects that provide a benefit to communities while providing hands-on, readiness training for soldiers.

"Project size, location, and man power, were the three deciding factors (for the project)," said Jandreau. "After observing the Mickelson Trail Bridge projects for quite awhile now, it was very apparent that the National Guard could meet all these needs."

"These types of projects facilitate goodwill and service to our local communities and state parks," said Capt. Nate Livermont, 842nd commander. "This is also an excellent opportunity to showcase our technical skills."

Bear Butte was established as a state park in 1961 and attracts thousands of visitors each year. Also known as Mato Paha or "Bear Mountain," the geological laccolith formation is an important landmark and religious site for the Lakota and other Native American tribes.

About 15 soldiers from the Unit's vertical construction platoon worked on the project as part of their two-week annual training. They replaced the deck boards on the foundation of the 30-by-16 foot structure, as well as installed new railings and about 40 feet of stairs leading up to the platform.

One of the unique challenges of the project is Bear Butte's elevation and rugged, steep terrain. The trail has a vertical climb of nearly 1,000 feet from the base to the summit and is 1.85 miles long. In order to deliver the lumber, equipment, and supplies safely and efficiently, the SDNG's Company C, 1-189th Aviation Regiment provided assistance with a HH-60 Black Hawk helicopter to sling load in the heavy materials.



(continued on next page)

BEAR BUTTE PROJECT (CONTINUED)

In addition to providing skills training for the unit's carpenters and other job specialties, the project also helped the soldiers work through problem solving and project management.

"With facilitation from Command Sgt. Maj. Mike Shay (IRT manager), our partnership with GFP has been seamless," said Livermont. "Several factors contributed to the success of this mission; we were blessed with beautiful weather, thoroughly engaged partners from GFP, and consummate professionals from the 1-189th Aviation."

"The experience has been all positive, who isn't impressed by a helicopter to do the heavy lifting and all the guys from the 842nd power walking their way up the mountain for 10 days and putting it all on the line to achieve a quality outcome," said Jandreau.



SDNG PARTNERS WITH KENTUCKY ARMY DEPOT IN MUNITIONS READINESS

South Dakota National Guard members from the 1742nd Transportation Company found themselves a long way from home this week, getting their M915 long-haul tractor trailers loaded with munitions at Blue Grass Army Depot (BGAD) in Richmond, Kentucky, for subsequent transport to Crane Army Ammunition Activity (CAAA) in Indiana.

The 1742nd is just one of several Army National Guard units partnering with ammo storage locations around the country as part of an Army Materiel Command (AMC) initiative called, Operation Patriot Press 2021 (OPP-21). OPP-21 provides units real-world mission work throughout AMC subordinate commands to improve Army strategic objectives in readiness and total force integration.

“Besides directly impacting overall Army Readiness,” said BGAD Commander Col. Steve Dorris, “Operation Patriot Press addresses other strategic objectives, including Total Force Integration. The exercise provides opportunity for actual missions to and from designated locations, transporting conventional munitions as required. OPP-21 provides Army National Guard (ARNG) Soldiers real-world evolutions that are both challenging and enable assessment of internal training objectives for these transportation organizations.”



OPP-21 will continue at BGAD for a total of six weeks, during which more than 1,000 short tons of munitions will be moved. The 1742nd Transportation Company was responsible for hauling more than 30 containers of munitions from BGAD to CAAA, while another ARNG unit from the state of Michigan conducted transport of conventional munitions between BGAD and McAlester Army Ammunition Plant.

“The professionalism demonstrated by the participating units and team BGAD really stood out to me,” says Col. Dorris. “I’m very proud of the entire effort and the intense focus placed on safe execution of the mission.”

SDDVA CLAIMS OFFICE TEAM PARTICIPATES IN VA2K 2021

Big shout out and kudos to our SDDVA's Claims Office team for participating in the Sioux Falls VA 11th Annual VA2K Walk and Roll this week. In addition to partaking in the walk, they also donated baskets full of supplies to assist homeless veterans.



VA TO RE-ADJUDICATE CLAIMS FOR POSSIBLE HERBICIDE EXPOSURE

Veterans who were previously denied service connection for an [herbicide related presumptive condition](#) due to lack of in-country Vietnam service will have their claims automatically re-adjudicated by the VA.

The Department began re-adjudicating claims in April for veterans who served in the offshore waters of the Republic of Vietnam during the Vietnam War but were denied for one or more herbicide related conditions, on the basis that military service was not performed on the landmass of the Republic of Vietnam or on its inland waterways.

“Re-adjudication means the VA will review the evidence of record and provide replacement decisions in the cases of veterans who were previously denied service connection benefits,” said Acting VA Under Secretary for Benefits Thomas Murphy. “We have the proper resources in place to meet the needs of our veteran community and will ensure all eligible veterans’ and their survivors’ claims are examined thoroughly and fairly.”

The review also applies to eligible survivors of deceased Vietnam-era Veterans and is part of the Veterans Benefits Administration’s implementation of the Nov. 5, 2020, U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California order in [Nehmer vs. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs](#), requiring the VA to re-adjudicate previously denied claims.

The VA will determine if benefits for qualifying disabilities can now be paid retroactively to the date of previously denied claims. The court’s decision requires automatic re-adjudication in such cases without requiring a new claim, and potentially paying benefits to the survivors or estates of deceased beneficiaries.

Click here for more information is regarding VA disability benefits based on [Agent Orange exposure](#).

HEROES CONTINUE TO PROVIDE FOR HEROES

Special shout out to Geraldine Warner, Mary Hamm, Alice Mentele, and Christi Job for their continuous support of our heroes at the Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home. This team has been busy creating and delivering handmade quilts and catheter covers for our veterans. Their dedication and selfless acts are appreciated.



GOVERNOR NOEM CALLS FOR RAISING MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

Governor Kristi Noem has proclaimed May as Mental Health Awareness Month in South Dakota. The goal is raising awareness about mental health challenges and resources that are available to help.

The Department of Social Services (DSS) helps strengthen and support South Dakota children, adults, and families with behavioral health needs through a wide variety of services no matter where you live across our state.

“We know that everyone faces challenges in life that can impact their mental health. It’s normal, it’s treatable, and we want folks to know that,” said DSS Cabinet Secretary Laurie Gill. “We also know that with effective treatment, people can recover and live happy healthy lives.”

Thirty-three percent of South Dakotans reported in 2019 feeling that their mental health was not good for at least one day in the previous month. More than 10 percent reported feeling that way for two weeks or more. More than one-third of high school aged youth in 2019 reported feeling sad or hopeless almost every day for two or more weeks in a row.

Help is available wherever you live in South Dakota. DSS contracts with 11 accredited community mental health

centers, helps with providing substance use disorder services, psychiatric hospitalization, and services for offenders incarcerated in state correctional facilities. Mental health and substance use disorder treatment and services are available even if you don’t have insurance or money to pay.

To learn more about resource options, visit dss.sd.gov and click on the Behavioral Health tab.

You can also visit 605Strong.com or dial 211 to reach the 211 Helpline Center. 605 Strong program staff are trained to provide stress relief and handle mental health crises. The Helpline Center can also provide referrals to other resources.

SDSP
SOUTH DAKOTA
SUICIDE PREVENTION

Search

BE THE 1SD.COM

Need Help Now?
1.800.273.8255
Help available 24/7

SUICIDE
PREVENTION
LIFELINE

Sign up for our e-newsletter

About Suicide Get Help State Plans Professionals Events Specific Populations Survivors Toolkits

With Help Comes Hope

Suicide is a preventable public health problem.
One of the ways to prevent suicide is to talk about it.

[Read More](#)

PARK RX: A PRESCRIPTION FOR A DAY IN THE PARK

The South Dakota Department of Health, Department of Game, Fish & Parks, and SDSU Extension are teaming up with doctors and healthcare providers to encourage physical activity through the Park Rx project.

The project encourages healthcare providers to prescribe exercise – and when they do – patients can take their Park Rx to any South Dakota State Park and turn it in for a FREE pass for the day. Patients can also turn in the pass that same day and receive a discounted annual pass to encourage year long activity.

The trend to prescribe physical activity is sweeping the nation and we want healthcare providers in South Dakota to sign up and get their patients moving.

Spread the word!

- Talk to your friends and family and tell them how to get their own Park Rx.
- Download this [flyer](#). Show it to your doctor or healthcare provider and ask if they are participating in the Park Rx project.



Healthcare Providers:

PRESCRIBE A DAY IN THE PARK!

The SD Department of Health and Department of Game, Fish and Parks are teaming up *to help you motivate your patients!*

Healthcare providers can **now** prescribe a **FREE 1-DAY PASS** to any state park. This 1-day pass can also be turned in for a discounted annual pass.

The SD Park Prescription Project aligns with the vision of the *Exercise is Medicine* initiative. Let's make physical activity a standard part of disease prevention and treatment!

To request your Parks Prescription Pads, go to HealthySD.gov/park-rx



CPT JAMES AHN MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Captain James Ahn, a graduate of UC Riverside and the Claremont McKenna College Army ROTC program, died in 2015 during a parachute training operation while participating with his Special Forces unit in Washington State.

In James' honor, ROTC Consulting is sponsoring an annual scholarship of \$1,000 to a Special Forces Veteran who is working towards the completion of a higher education degree.

To learn more about the scholarship, please visit the ROTC Consulting link at: [CPT James Ahn Memorial Scholarship - ROTC Consulting](#).



FLYING HORSE BRIDGE DEDICATED

Lt. Governor Larry Rhoden and SDDVA Secretary Greg Whitlock conducted the South Dakota Fallen Hero Bridge dedication on May 15 near McIntosh. The HWY 12 bridge one mile east of McIntosh was dedicated to LCPL Conrad Flying Horse who died in combat on August 27, 1970, after suffering wounds received when an explosive went off. Flying Horse was serving in the Marine Corps in South Vietnam, Quang Nam province.



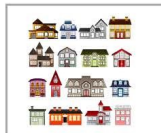
Special guest, Dr. Thomas Collins who was a general surgeon in Sanford, Maine for 30 years, joined South Dakota in honoring Conrad. Dr. Collins was a young lieutenant in the Navy Medical Corps assigned to the Hospital ship USS Sanctuary, on station in DaNang harbor, Republic of Vietnam and was first to treat Conrad. He shared his story with family and friends and noted that although their encounter was brief, Conrad had touched his life and would be remembered forever.

Did you know the Sioux Falls VA HCS has the following programs and specially trained staff to serve our local homeless Veteran population?

Sean Guthmiller-HUD-VASH Coordinator
Alex Christensen-HUD-VASH Case Manager
Brooke Rozeboom-HUD-VASH Case Manager
Danielle Lee-HUD-VASH Case Manager
Mathia Rall-HUD-VASH SUD Case Manager

Kelsi Wilcox-HUD-VASH Case Manager
Sherry Cary-GPD Liaison
Kristy Anderson-HCHV Outreach/CR Coordinator
Becky Hess-VJO/VJP Coordinator

Homeless Program Goals



To end homelessness among Veterans by providing evidence-based, cost effective services that result in a high level of Veteran and stakeholder satisfaction.

Healthcare for Homeless Veterans (HCHV)



Basic services including intake/assessment and determination of need. This initial step allows for homeless prevention, eviction prevention, referral to other Veteran specific programs, and assistance with locating housing in the community. Geared toward Veterans who have an eviction notice or are currently literally homeless.

Healthcare for Homeless Veterans-

Contract Emergency Residential Services (HCHV-CERS) Berakhah House



9 bed, 60-day housing programs for single Veterans, male or female. Volunteers of America-Dakotas provides food, shelter, and case management services to individuals in the program. Referral for programming is through HCHV.

Grant Per Diem-Transition in Place (GPD-TIP)



A transitional housing program for homeless Veterans. It is designed to be 6-12-month program. Volunteers of America-Dakotas applied for and received grant funding. Veterans and their families are allowed in this program. Referral for programming is through HCHV.

Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO)



A homeless prevention program. VA staff is a member of Veterans Court in Watertown, Sioux Falls, and Sioux City. VJO provides support to the Veteran to engage in VA services as well as housing resources.

Housing and Urban Development-VA Supported Housing (HUD-VASH)



A permanent supportive housing for Veterans. Program is designed to provide intensive case management services for Veterans, in coordination with Sioux Falls Housing. Veterans in this program often have been chronically homeless, with history of inability to maintain housing without case management support. Veterans often have mental health, SUD, and complex medical issues impacting their stability. Veterans and their families are allowed in this program. Referral for programming is through HCHV.



*She chose to serve.
She wore these.*

WOMEN VETERAN

VIRTUAL TOWN HALL

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

June 16, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

veteransaffairs.webex.com/veteransaffairs

Or Join by Phone: 1- 833-355-0712

Meeting number 199 308 4161#

Join the Sioux Falls VA Staff as they discuss:

Sioux Falls VA Women's Health Services
VA Maternity Care Coverage
Overview of Whole Health
Available remote technologies
VBA Benefits
Million Veterans Program
Efforts to End Harassment

For more information:

Contact Brenda Fredericks at 605-336-3230

EXT. 6250

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

UPCOMING EVENTS

- May 31—State Veterans Cemetery Memorial Day Program and Ribbon Cutting—2:00 pm (CT)
- June 1—PVT David Crow and PVT Dale Crow Bridge Dedication—Bison High School—2:00 pm (MT)
- June 11—VABHHCS Pine Ridge Veteran Stand Down and Enrollment Fair—Pine Ridge Pow Wow Grounds—10:00 am—2:00 pm (MT)
- June 13—Midwest Honor Flight Honor Ride—Begins at Military Heritage Alliance—Sioux Falls (1600 W. Russell Street)—Registration 12:30 pm (CT) and ride begins at 2:30 pm (CT)
- June 16—VABHHCS Veteran Stand Down—Eagle Butte Pow Wow Grounds—10:00 am—2:00 pm (MT)
- June 17-20—VFW 91st State Convention—Kelly Inn (1607 E. HWY 50)—Yankton
- June 24-27—American Legion State Convention—Crossroads (100 4th ST SW)—Huron
- July 21—South Dakota Veterans Council Meeting—Military Heritage Alliance Building—Sioux Falls—9:00 am (CT)
- Aug 16-18—SDDVA Annual Benefits School—Ramkota Hotel—Pierre
- Aug 23—Midwest Honor Flight Fundraiser at Barrel House—Sioux Falls (4701 E. 54th Street)
- Oct 23—Midwest Honor Flight Hangar Dance at the South Dakota Military Heritage Alliance—Sioux Falls (1600 W. Russell Street)



HONOR RIDE
MIDWEST HONOR FLIGHT

"RIDING TO KEEP THEM FLYING"

Sunday, June 13, 2021 | 2:30 PM

Registration begins at 12:30 PM at the South Dakota Military Heritage Alliance. Honor a Veteran you know and ride to raise funds for Midwest Honor Flight. Ride includes a slow salute past the Sioux Falls VA Hospital before an escort to the new South Dakota State Cemetery.

MORE INFORMATION & PRE-REGISTRATION:
MIDWESTHONORFLIGHT.ORG/RIDE

Midwest Honor Flight is a 100% volunteer organization. All proceeds from this event go directly towards future Honor Flight and more importantly, our local Veterans.

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